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Is Brazilian Portuguese being taught as a community or heritage language?

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Abstract

The development of the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese as a community language in a number of countries, including England, is a recent phenomenon. This article sets to discuss historical as well as current political and social issues related to this development, including issues about the terminologies adopted in different countries to refer to the languages migrants bring with them. The discussions are placed against the background of Brazilian international migration which only became significant in the second half of the 1980s. A review of the first publications on the Brazilian community schools in England shows the key role these schools have in the identity development of their pupils. Consequently, a continuous growth in the number of these schools has been witnessed since 1997. This growth is documented in this article, as are the challenges these schools face in running their services and activities. The development of networks locally, nationally and internationally is acknowledged as a creative way adopted by the schools to work together towards overcoming these challenges. Nevertheless, a call is made for other nodes to be included in these networks: mainstream schools and schools maintained by other migrant groups.

Introduction

The importance of heritage languages: This was the theme of the Second European Symposium on the Teaching of Portuguese as a Heritage Language (II-SEPOLH) held at the Technical University of Munich in 2015. Portuguese is a Romance language that developed in the Iberian Peninsula and established its independent linguistic identity in the 14th century. The Portuguese language was then taken to Africa, Asia and the Americas by Portuguese colonisers in the 15th and 16th centuries. Consequentely, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor have Portuguese as their official language. However, it is in Brazil, with a population of 204,450,659[i], that most of its speakers live.

Some speakers of Brazilian Portuguese are also found in the UK, a country with a significant number of Brazilian migrants. Therefore, this article sets to examine the historical as well as current political and social issues related to the status of Brazilian Portuguese in this country. With this aim, the main questions to be addressed in this paper are the following:

(1) When was it that Brazilian Portuguese became one of the languages used in the UK?
(2) How is Brazilian Portuguese being taught in the UK, as a community language or heritage language?

This article starts with a discussion of the terminologies adopted in different countries to refer to the languages migrants bring with them. This discussion is placed against the background of Brazilian international migration which has led to the presence of Brazilian schools in England. A historical perspective of these schools is presented and followed by a literature review on their development. The challenges faced by these schools are documented as are the networks they have developed with the aim of overcoming the challenges to them presented by the context in which they operate. This article, in spite of acknowledging the supportive role of the present networks, identifies the

need to expand the current networks that are focused on Brazilian individuals, institutions and governments to include English mainstream schools and schools maintained by other migrant groups.

Terminology – some definitions

Cummins' (1983) review of the teaching of the languages of minority students in Canada, the USA and Europe between 1968 and 1983 indicates that the teaching of heritage languages started at least 48 years ago. However, the term *heritage languages* was used for the first time only in 1977 in the Ontario Heritage Languages Program (Cummins 1983). The program offered language lessons with the aim of promoting cultural awareness, understanding and expression among students of migrant backgrounds. In other words, *heritage language* refers to the ethnocultural language of a community (Cummins 1983).

It was only about 20 years later, in the late 1990s, that American academics started to use the term *heritage languages* (García 2005). According to Wiley (2005), this '[…] label is used to refer to immigrant, refugee, and indigenous languages, as well as former colonial languages' (p. 595). Nonetheless, Baker and Jones (1998 in Wiley 2005: 596) point to the danger of adopting this label, as it may be viewed as portraying stronger links to the past. This seems to be the case with Fishman's (2001) definition that presents heritage language (HL) as being any ancestral language. This perception of HL as representing something old is criticized by García (2005):

> 'Positioning languages other than English in the United States as *heritage languages* clearly is rear-viewing. It speaks to what was left behind in remote lands, what is in one's past. By leaving the languages in the past, the term *heritage languages* connotes something that one holds onto vaguely as one's remembrances, but certainly not something that is used in the present or that can be projected into the future.' (p. 601)

García (2005) makes these criticisms in relation to Spanish, a language that has an active role in the routine of millions of speakers in the USA who use it alongside English. She claims that bilingualism is in fact the relevant heritage of these speakers. Therefore, the American government's adoption of language policies which have a monolingual perspective impedes the perception of bilingualism as an asset and thus places languages other than English in a negative light. In García's own words:

> 'In the United States, we have gone from the two solitudes of our two languages in bilingualism, to our sole solitude in English, with whispers in other languages. Our multiple identities have been silenced, with one language identity reduced to that of a *heritage*.' (García 2005: 605)

Nevertheless, García acknowledges that the use of this term in educational contexts creates a space for the use of languages other than English. A similar concern for the safeguarding of diverse linguistic and cultural heritages is also present in the European Constitution[ii]. However, the term *minority language* tends to be more widely used in Europe than *heritage language* (de Bot & Gorter 2005). It does not mean though that the term has been freed of criticisms. As mentioned by Arthur & McPake[iii], *minority language* suggests a limited number of speakers (which contradicts the official status of certain languages in other countries, such as Portuguese which is spoken by over 260 million people worldwide[iv]) or less value in relation to the *majority language* (i.e. the language of the host society). In addition, both these labels (*minority language* and *heritage language*) highlight the linguistic and the cultural experiences migrants bring with them, which could be seen as emphasising a static and essentialist view of the preservation of past experiences to be transmitted to future generations.

In contrast, Horvath & Vaughan (1991) point out that although many migrants do not plan to discard either their language or their culture, it does not mean that they are rejecting the host language and culture. They refer to a more multicultural perspective which focuses on the present and the future of the language of migrants in the host country, their *community language*. This term has been used to refer to languages other than English and Aboriginal languages in Australia since 1975. Although *community language* draws attention to the use of language in shared social and cultural contexts, this term has been criticised for implying that the speakers share linguistic values, whereas the language being described may have contested varieties and language standardisation (Arthur & McPake op.cit.). In spite of this criticism, *community language* is a term also used in the UK, where it describes '[…] languages […] used by ethnic minority communities […] whatever their level of competence [towards which they] experience an emotional attachment and which form a part of their heritage and thus of their identity' (Anderson & Chun 2012).

Independent of the term used (see summary of their definitions in Table 1 below), Blackledge and Creese (2008) advocate that linguistic and cultural heritage '[...] may be transmitted, accepted, contested, subverted, appropriated, and otherwise negotiated' (p. 538). In other words, heritage is part of a dialogical process in which parents and their children negotiate social, cultural and linguistic experiences. In spite of this, the strong influence the USA has had in the terminology around heritage issues cannot be ignored. The fact that Brazilian academics, including myself, have adopted the term *heritage language* to describe the teaching of Portuguese to children of Brazilian backgrounds being raised abroad illustrates this.

Terminology adopted	In reference to	In	By	Positive aspects	Criticisms	Source
Heritage languages	Ethnocultural language of a community	1977	Canada	- Promotes cultural awareness, understanding and expression - Creates space in educational systems for languages other than the local one	- Emphasis links with the past - Represents something old - Presents languages in a negative light	Cummins 1983
	Immigrant, refugee, indigenous languages and former colonial languages	Late 1990s	USA			García 2005 Wiley 2005
Minority languages	Languages of migrant groups		Europe	- Safeguards diverse linguistic and cultural heritages	- Suggests a limited number of speakers - Suggests language to be of less value - Presents a satic and essentialist view	de Bot & Gorter 2005 Arthur & McPake n.d.
Community languages	Languages other than English and Aboriginal languages	1975	Australia	- Allows for a multicultural perspective - Focuses on the present and the future of the languages in the host country and on shared social and cultural contexts	- Implies shared linguistic values of all their speakers and ignores language varieties	Horvath & Vaughan 1991 Arthur & McPake n.d.
	Languages used by ethnic minority communities		UK			Anderson & Chun 2012

Table 1- Summary of the language terminologies in this article

Brazilian Portuguese in London – a general contextual background

The main cause for the development of the teaching of heritage languages was and is migration. The teaching of Brazilian Portuguese as a Heritage Language - hence POLH[v] (pronounced as 'Paul' /'pɔ:l/) - in the UK is no different. Brazilian migration to the UK started in the very beginning of the 20th century with 392 Brazilian-born persons being recorded in the 1901 census (Kubal, Bakewell & de Haas 2011), but it was only in the 1980s that Brazilian migration became significant worldwide. The political and economic situation of Brazil in that period forced Brazilian nationals to migrate in search of work opportunities abroad. Nonetheless, a natural part of one's migratory project is the possibility to return to the country of origin. The beginning of the world economic crisis in 2008 and the positive changes in the economic situation of Brazil around the same time added to this characteristic of migration (the returning) and triggered a large number of Brazilian emigrants to move back to their native land. Nevertheless, the number of Brazilian emigrants is still high, over 3 million (MRE 2015). In the European context, the UK has the third most significant number of Brazilians, after Portugal and Spain (MRE 2015).

The latest Brazilian official estimates show this group to reach a number of 120,000 members in the UK (MRE 2015), whereas the unofficial estimates mention this number to be over twice as many (Evans, Dias, Martins Jr, Souza & Tonhati 2015). In contrast, the numbers reported by the 2011 British Census (ONS 2013) are lower than half of the Brazilian official estimates. Among the difficulties in estimating these numbers, it is possible to mention that a number of Brazilian migrants hold European passports and some are undocumented migrants (Evans et al 2015). One issue on which the Brazilian and the British estimates agree is that the largest number of Brazilian migrants is found in London (Evans et al 2015; ONS 2013).

One consequence of the large number of Brazilian migrants in the English capital is that Brazilian Portuguese can be used in all of its 33 boroughs in order to access a variety of services. The number of Brazilians, coupled with the reasonably sized community of migrants from Portugal (Barradas, 2010), has been reflected in the 2012 London School Census (NALDIC[vi]). This census reported over 24,000 Portuguese-speaking pupils to be attending primary and secondary schools in the UK, which makes Portuguese the 11th most-spoken language among pupils in London schools (NALDIC ibid.). Many of these pupils also enrol in after-school language courses offered by the Camões Institute[vii] and Brazilian community schools (Souza & Barradas 2014).

Brazilian community schools in the UK – a short historical overview

Community schools are also called supplementary or complementary schools. As noted by Issa & Williams (2009), '[t]he terminology changes in line with the changing functions and the way [the schools] are perceived by the communities running them' (p. vii). In other words, the three terms are used in the British context and tend to emphasise different aspects of the schools. The community schools clearly focus on the maintenance of the heritage of a group, be it preservation of language, culture and/or religion. The supplementary schools offer services that supplement the work of the mainstream schools, such as home-work club, culturally specific studies, or other types of study support. In other words, they make up for a deficiency in the mainstream system. In contrast, the complementary schools are so called due to the fact that they aim to preserve the languages and the cultures of the communities they serve with a view to complement the formal education offered by the society that host them. In this way, the complementary and the mainstream schools enhance each other's qualities and contributions to the children's learning and identity formation. *Community* is the term adopted in this article to refer to the Brazilian schools due to their focus on preservation of their heritage. However, all three terms are used interchangeably in this article in order to reflect the choice of terms of the authors of the work covered.

The complementary schools in England have been categorised in three types (Li Wei 2006). The first complementary schools directed their services to the children of Afro-Caribbean heritage and specifically addressed the cultural aspects of this group. The late 1970s and early 1980s saw the beginning of the complementary schools that focused on the religious traditions of Muslim families from Asia and Africa. Around the same time, a number of other migrant communities started complementary schools in order to preserve their linguistic and cultural heritage. The main characteristic shared by these institutions is that they are organized by community groups. Their importance to the groups to which they are linked is well described by Parke, Drury, Kenner and Robertson (2002) in the quotation below.

> 'If the heart of any community is its language and culture, then in the case of minority ethnic groups, community language schools must be the main arteries. Without organized meetings for maintaining established traditions, or indeed developing new ones, the community is in danger of losing its essence. The role of the community language school is crucial in keeping the community alive and together and in acculturating and initiating younger members of that community into the established linguistic and cultural practices. For most minority ethnic groups, the community language schools stand for the far-away places to which the members feel they belong. The schools embody the spirit of 'home' and provide the context to meet, talk, read, eat and party, here in Britain where the members also belong.' (p. 216)

This close link between language, culture and belonging seems to be one of the reasons that the Brazilian and the Portuguese schools are separate. In addition, Portuguese emigration started before Brazilian emigration and Portugal was the first Portuguese-speaking country to invest in the teaching of Portuguese abroad in the 1970s (Souza & Barradas 2014). The Portuguese schools are now organized by the Camões Institute, which was created in 1992 under the supervision of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Barradas 2010). In the 2013-2014 academic year, over 4,000 pupils enrolled in the lessons offered by Camões Institute in London (Souza & Barradas 2014). Nonetheless, the teaching of European Portuguese has had no impact on the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese. The Brazilian migration started much later than the Portuguese, so did the activities of the Brazilian community schools. Brazilian migrants have shown to value the role of the Portuguese language and the Brazilian culture in their identities and have gathered forces to organize their own community schools. However, it is a fact that these schools are concentrated in London, as illustrated in the map below, which reflects the estimate that the English capital holds more than half the total number of Brazilians in the UK (ONS 2013).

The map below shows nine schools which are active in London at the time this article is written. It is also relevant to know that another five schools[viii] are active in other parts of England. These fourteen schools are part of ABRIR, an association which will be discussed later in this article. Additionally, there are three other schools in England and one in Scotland which are not linked to this association. In sum, the UK has witnessed the growth of Brazilian community schools from one in 1997 to 18 in 2016, which attests to the fact that the number of schools changes constantly. This change can be positive, when new schools are open, as well as negative, when schools stop their activities. It is known that at least six schools that taught POLH have closed[ix] during the same period, i.e between 1997 and 2016. The challenges that may (have led) lead to the closure of Brazilian community schools are discussed later in this article.

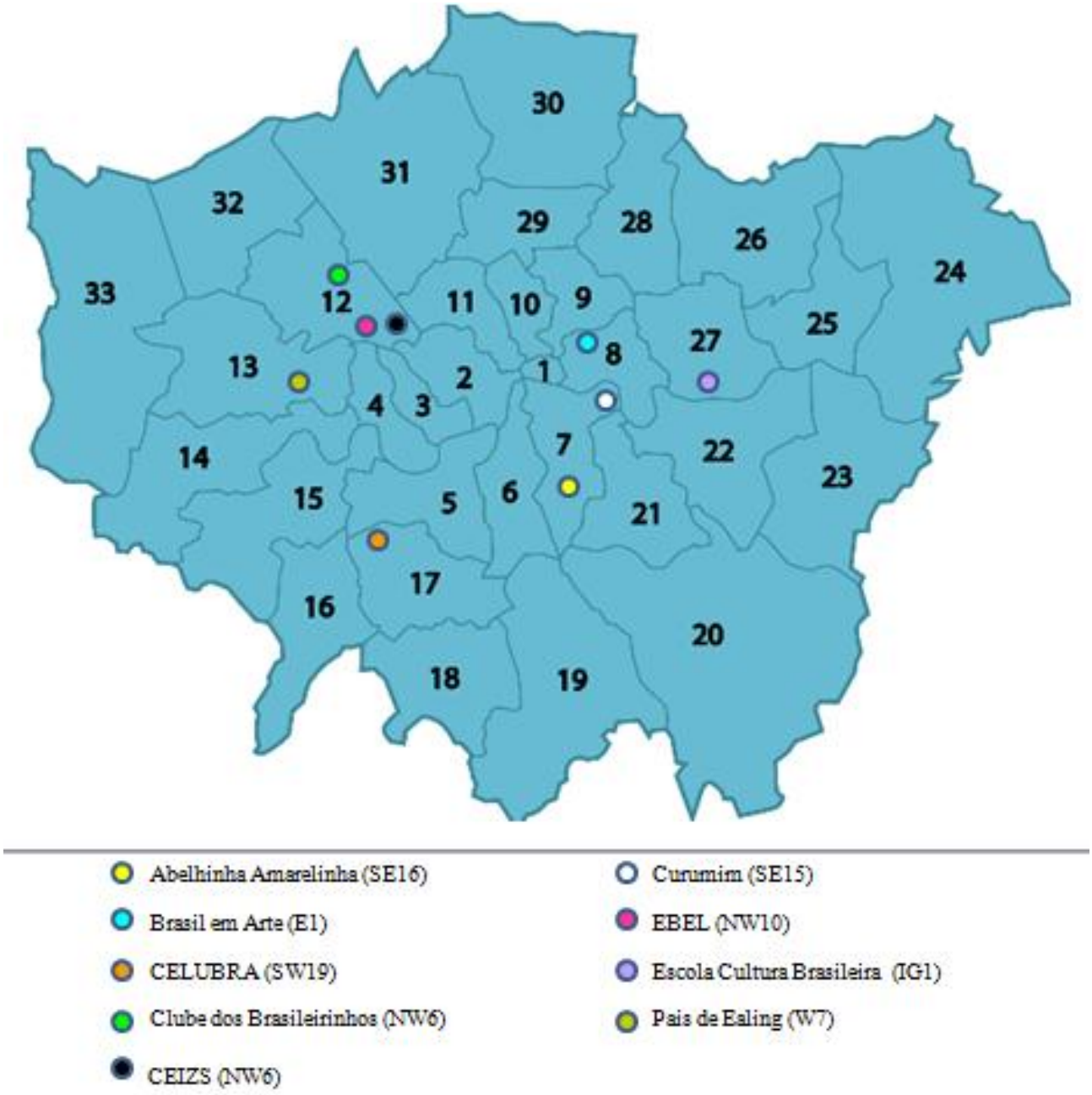

Figure 1 – Brazilian community schools in London[x]

Brazilian community schools in the UK – a brief literature review

In 2003, NALDIC (the National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum) presented the first publication on Brazilian community schools. This publication is in fact a summary (Souza 2003) of the first doctoral study on these schools in the UK, which was completed three years later in 2006. This summary focuses on the positive contributions of the schools in the development of a sense of identity of mixed-heritage children, in this case, children who had a Brazilian mother and a father of another nationality. As quoted in the summary, the initial research results showed that

> '[…] being bilingual brings benefits to children of intermarriage. Children naturally make the connection between the languages people are able to speak and who they are. Promoting the teaching of community languages fosters a positive sense of hybrid

> identity among these children. Some mothers are already aware of these benefits and organise community language lessons for their children through Saturday schools.' (Souza 2003: 1)

The study was completed and a short publication of one of its findings appeared in an English practitioners' newsletter in 2007. This second publication examined more closely the relationship between the children's language choice and social identity. The main point made is that being familiar with the issues that may affect the children's sense of identity will enable teachers to more properly assess and understand the

> '[...] children's reasons and intentions for making their language choices and [...] the identities they wish to portray. These findings can help community teachers to understand that the use of different languages in their classrooms is not a sign of failure on their part or on the part of the students. Rather, it can be a way for children to negotiate their identities in the different groups to which they belong.' (Souza 2007: 6)

Although Brazilian migration to the USA became significant sooner and has always been in larger numbers than to England[xi], the academic publications on POLH started around the same time in both countries. Mota published the first article on the bilingual socialization of children of Brazilian families in the USA in 2004. Her study investigated children in two community contexts: home and church. Mota (2004) observed that the Brazilian parents value the role of Portuguese in the lives of their children for two main reasons: (1) Portuguese is seen as a marker of Brazilian identity and (2) Portuguese may be an instrumental asset if/when returning to Brazil. As a consequence, the parents decide to include the use of Portuguese as the language of interaction at home and attendance of religious services in which Portuguese is the language adopted. The first group on record to offer the teaching of Portuguese to children of Brazilian families in the USA was *Fundação Vamos Falar Português,* which started its activities in Florida in December 2004 (Cariello 2015), six months after Mota's study. Therefore, she could not have examined this domain. Nevertheless, her work was seminal in giving prominence to POLH and opened the path to the researchers that came after her.

Academic articles started to mention Brazilian community language schools in the USA only in 2011, when Santos (2011) explains that, due to acknowledging POLH as a new field of studies, the Georgetown University in Washington D.C. develops links with a local group in order to provide teacher training and develop teaching materials. Lico (2011), who chairs the activities of the Brazilian community language school in partnership with the Georgetown University, stresses that the initiatives for the teaching of POLH in the USA result from parents' desires to transmit their linguistic and cultural heritage to their children. Mota's (2004) work has signalled the active role of parents in the teaching of POLH in the USA as have Souza & Barradas (2014) in the UK, where the establishment of networks is also present.

Networks – developing supportive links

The Brazilian community schools face similar challenges in running their activities as do other migrant groups in the UK. One issue is the fact that they are housed in a variety of venues. These venues tend to be shared spaces, which are used on other days for other purposes, such as church halls, community centres, public libraries and mainstream schools (Martin, Bhatt, Bhojani and Creese 2006). Sharing imposes a number of difficulties. The schools are usually unable to store their own materials in the rented or borrowed spaces, for example. Many times, the shared spaces are very basic premises that only provide a room, desks and chairs. In the case of the rooms rented out by mainstream schools, it is common for the community school teachers not to be allowed to access any of the teaching resources in the room, such as interactive whiteboards. Access to

resources is indeed one of the main difficulties faced by community schools, be they Brazilian or those linked to another group of migrants. This is acknowledged by Issa and Williams (2009) who also highlight the fact that these schools tend not to have access to textbooks in support of their lessons – when they do, these books tend to be brought from their home countries, and thus, are inappropriate for the learning context of the children growing up in the UK.

In addition, there are limitations in the training of the teachers who work in these schools. Similarly to teachers of European Portuguese (Barradas 2010), most of the Brazilian teachers working in the community schools in the UK were trained abroad, in their case, in Brazil. This training means that they are not familiar, for instance, with issues of bilingualism and the challenges of working with a class with extremely varied levels of linguistic abilities in both Portuguese and English. The training needs of teachers in community schools has been raised by academics (see for example Issa & Williams 2009) and felt by the teachers and the schools themselves. As a consequence of these and other challenges, the Brazilian community schools have organized themselves under an association named ABRIR[xii] (from the Portuguese abbreviation for Brazilian Association for Educational Projects in the UK), briefly mentioned above. This association was founded in 2006 by a group of teachers who had been involved in the community schools and had experienced the constraints in which these schools operate.

At a local level, ABRIR has developed partnerships with universities in London, such as the Institute of Education, in order to offer training that includes an understanding of British law in relation to the safeguarding of children as well as an exploration of the profile of learners of POLH and how to deal with their peculiarities in terms of teaching and learning. At a national level, the Brazilian community schools are supported by ABRIR through workshops to parents and teachers as well as pedagogical supervisions, which involve help with lesson planning, observation of lessons, and joint reflection on the delivery of lessons. At an international level, social media that include a website, a blog, Twitter and Facebook accounts and a YouTube channel have been developed to offer free access to online information on education, bilingualism and POLH as well as cultural events to teachers, families and schools worldwide. Also international are the links developed with the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs which since 2008 organizes a conference entitled Brazilians in the World, a forum for debate on the Brazilian policies aimed at Brazilians living abroad. ABRIR represented the Brazilian community schools in the UK in all of these conferences through the submission of a report highlighting the needs of this group. As an illustration, the report sent to the 2013 conference, the most recent one, lists seven main challenges faced by schools in the UK: (1) lack of appropriate venues; (2) limited availability of teacher training, professional development courses and qualifications; (3) the non-existence of a curriculum for the teaching of POLH[xiii]; (4) lack of adequate teaching resources and materials; (5) range of pupils' linguistic abilities; (6) the need to boost pupils' motivation; and (7) the importance to develop a bigger commitment on the part of the families who take their children to the school and the ones that coordinate the school activities - some of these mentioned earlier in this article. The report also acknowledges that these seven challenges are linked mainly to the great mobility of the families and the teachers as well as to lack of financial resources. In fact, being under-funded and under-resourced has been reported as an issue for schools ran by other groups of migrants too (see for example Francis, Archer and Mau 2008).

ABRIR has also been instrumental in creating links with Brazilian community schools in other European countries. In 2013, it created the SEPOLH, an abbreviation from the Portuguese name for the European Symposium on the Teaching of Portuguese as a Heritage Language. In its first edition, I-SEPOLH gathered 53 participants from ten different countries in the UK which led to the creation of *Elo Europeu* (European Link), a network of teachers based in Europe whose aim is to encourage the exchange of information about the teaching of POLH on this continent. SEPOLH's second edition in Germany in 2015 attracted twice as many participants. More importantly than the size of

these networks are the knowledge and the experience being exchanged in support of all the schools and the teachers involved.

In spite of the positive achievements which resulted from the development of the local, national and international links developed by the Brazilian community schools which are active in England, some of the nodes in the educational network in which they operate are still to be connected.

Networks – nodes to be interconnected

This section starts by exploring the three key words in its heading: network, node, interconnection. For the purposes of this article, a network is understood as a group of people and/or institutions which come together to exchange what is here referred to as capital: information, contacts, resources as well as ideas for projects and activities. Each of the individuals and institutions in this network is a node - that is, a point of reference that can connect with another point of reference (node) to transmit and receive capital created by themselves or others as well as re-used capital. Nonetheless, this exchange of capital can only take place if the different nodes connect with one another within the existing network, through its expansion and/or the creation of links to other networks.

As discussed in the previous section, the Brazilian community schools in England have successfully come together via the creation of local networks, created links with the Brazilian government via their Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with Brazilian community schools in Europe. In other words, their networks are limited to other Brazilian individuals and institutions. These networks illustrate the point made by Kenner & Ruby (2013) that '[…] complementary schools […] are rarely linked with mainstream education' (p. 396). The label *complementary schools* triggers an expectation of a closer relationship between both types of schools, as discussed earlier in this article. Therefore, the lack of connection reported by Kenner & Ruby (ibid.) is surprising. In the case of the Brazilian schools, the distance that exists between them and the mainstream schools is what has led me to refer to them as *community schools.*

On the one hand, this distance is partly caused by the Brazilian schools which tend to emphasise the preservation of their linguistic and cultural heritage. One's heritage maintenance is highly important to the formation of one's identity and to the strengthening of community links (Francis et al 2008, Mota 2004, Souza 2003). Nonetheless, there are dangers in favouring heritage maintenance over interaction with the local society. One of them is the perpetuation by and in the community schools of the frequently criticized monolingual and monocultural bias of the mainstream educational system. The pupils of community schools have diverse and multiple linguistic and cultural backgrounds that need to be acknowledged in order to foster positive identities and learning experiences (Anderson & Chung 2012, García 2005, Souza 2007). In other words, space could be created in the community schools for the use of both the community and the local languages as well as for the reference to social and cultural experiences in the country of origin, the wider local society and the community in the host country.

On the other hand, this distance is created by the British mainstream schools, which tend to exclude minority languages and cultures from their curriculum, in spite of children's natural bringing together of their experiences in their communities and in the host society. Kenner & Ruby (2013) recognize the potential of partnerships between complementary and mainstream schools to draw on (and develop) the children's multilingual and multicultural repertoire. As a consequence, they developed a project in which teachers from both contexts work together to develop a more linguistically and culturally diverse curriculum. Two primary and four complementary schools in East London worked together to jointly plan lessons which addressed topics taught in both settings.

Kenner & Ruby (2013) reported their action research to have had a positive impact on the children's experiences of learning in both settings. The children were allowed to bring their linguistic and cultural heritages to learning in mainstream schools, which enabled previously hidden knowledge to be showcased and valued, as observed by the researchers and recorded in the teachers' interviews. Kenner & Ruby (2013) also reported on the rich experience the project offered to the complementary and the mainstream teachers who could learn about each others' context. In their own words, '[m]utual respect and equal support between the two sectors is vital if children's worlds are to become truly interconnected, to the overall benefit of their learning' (p. 414).

Notwithstanding the possible benefits of the complementary-mainstream schools partnerships to pupils' learning, there have been suggestions that this potential should be treated with caution. Barradas (2010), for example, mentions that the independence of complementary schools to make decisions about their content and teaching methodology can be threatened in these partnerships, especially in the cases where their activities may be funded by the mainstream schools, even if only partly. Another concern raised is the threat of future government inspection of the complementary schools. Seddon et al (2006 in Barradas 2010) warns that one of the greatest assets of the complementary schools, i.e. their freedom, may be affected if regulations are imposed onto them – which would also negatively impact on educational diversity. Unfortunately, about ten years after this warning, we witness the British government's intention of moving towards the implementation of inspections of out-of-school education, an umbrella term under which complementary schools can be placed. A consultation[xiv] was in place between November 2015 and January 2016 with plans for the publication of the results by the end of this year.

Meanwhile, it seems relevant to recognize the potential of partnerships to be developed with schools organized by other migrant groups. As discussed in the previous section, the challenges faced by the various groups are very similar and revolve around financial and human resources. The opportunity to learn about how other groups deal with these challenges could only contribute to a better management of their activities and provision of services. Therefore, this article suggests that this be another node to be integrated into the networks of the Brazilian community schools.

Final remarks

Addressing the question of whether Brazilian Portuguese is a heritage or a community language (see introduction section), this article acknowledges that terminology changes in line with the context and the ideologies they represent (see Issa & William 2009). Therefore, the different terms used to describe the teaching of the languages of minority students in Australia, Canada, England and the USA were examined with a view to consider which one better suits the teaching of Brazilian Portuguese. The fact that the Brazilian schools in this country mainly aim at linguistic and cultural preservation place them in line with the term *community schools* with a focus on the teaching of their *community language.*

This teaching started in the late 1990s and, thus, is a recent phenomenon. Consequently, as explained above, the field of teaching Brazilian Portuguese to children of migrant background growing up abroad has been influenced by the work developed previously on other migrant groups and has led the term *heritage language* to be adopted by academics based in Brazil. However, García (2005) has reminded migrant communities of the importance of maintaining their multilingualism. This call relates to the fact that individuals simultaneously experience both language and culture in multiple worlds, which should be incorporated into the learning experiences offered by both the community and the mainstream schools (Kenner & Ruby 2013). After all, migrants may wish to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage at the same time that they may wish to learn the host language and culture (Horvath & Vaughan 1991).

This article advocates that the abbreviation POLH incorporates these two ideas. The full form of the term refers to *heritage language* (LH from Portuguese). The new word, POLH /‘pɔ:l/, is formed as an abbreviation of the term *Portuguese as a Heritage Language* from Portuguese, and thus becomes a new acronym adopted to represent the new interactions in the host country. In this way, POLH enables the dialogical process of the negotiations that take place between (and by) parents and their children in relation to their social, cultural and linguistic experiences in at least two countries – their country of origin and their host country – to be represented in its ideological perspective.

The next move is to consider ways to enable the Brazilian community schools working with the teaching of POLH in the UK (and worldwide, for the matter) to understand the importance of this dialogical process and expand their networks to include mainstream schools (with care in relation to the challenges examined in the previous section) as well as complementary schools linked to other migrant groups. The expectation is that their monolingual and monocultural bias be replaced by multilingual and multicultural teaching and learning practices that value the diversity of the simultaneous experiences their learners have within the Brazilian community and English society.

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[i] ftp://ftp.ibge.gov.br/Estimativas_de_Populacao/Estimativas_2015/estimativa_dou_2015_20150915.pdf (accessed April 2016)
[ii] Article I-3; see *Perspectives* http://europa.eu.int/constitution/index en.htm (accessed March 2016)
[iii] http://www.naldic.org.uk/Resources/NALDIC/Initial%20Teacher%20Education/Documents/Whatarecommunitylanguages.pdf (accessed March 2016)
[iv] http://observalinguaportuguesa.org/falantes-de-portugues-2 (accessed March 2016)
[v] This abbreviation was first used in 2011 by the the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a project for the professional development of teachers in partnership with the International Society of Portuguese as a Foreign Language (SIPLE) and the University of Brasília (UnB).
[vi] [vi] www.naldic.org.uk/ research-and-information/ eal-statistics/ lang.xlsx (accessed March 2016)
[vii] Camões Institute is a pubic organization integrated into the indirect administration of the Portugueese Government. In relation to issues of language and culture, Camões Institute is responsible for the teaching of European Portuguese abroad.
[viii] ABRACE-UK (Crawley), EBeCC (St Alban's), Ipê Amarelinho (East Hertfordshire), ABCD (Woking), Clubinho Verde-amarelo (Reading).
[ix] O Visconde (W3), Escola em Acton (W3), BCA – Brazilian Contemporary Arts (W6), Escola Portuguesa Suplementar, Escola Brasileira de Bromley (BR1) e Grupo Verde e Amarelo (SE9).

[x] London map sourced from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_London_boroughs (accessed March 2016). Although Wikipedia is not an academic source, this map is exactly the same as the ones used by official sources such as www.data.london.gov.uk. The Wikipedia map is selected due to its visual clarity. It is also important to point out that the dots indicating the location of the Brazilian schools were added by the author of this article, as was the key with the name of the schools and their London postcodes. The information provided is based on information available on Abrir's website (www.abrir.org.uk) and is reliable.

[xi] The Brazilian 2010 Census shows that 23.8% of the total of Brazilian international migrants are in the USA in contrast to 6.2% in England.

[xii] www.abrir.org.uk (accessed March 2016)

[xiii] Note that Switzerland (Canton of Zürich) has a Framework for the Teaching of Heritage languages, which is adopted by the Brazilian schools in that country.

[xiv] https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/out-of-school-education-settings-registration-and-inspection (accessed March 2016)